



Arlington Historic District Commissions Final and Approved Minutes

May 27, 2021 8:00 PM
Conducted by Remote Participation

Commissioners Present: M. Audin, M. Bush, B. Cohen, A. Johnson, S. Makowka, B. Melofchik, C. Tee, J. Worden

Commissioners Not Present: D. Baldwin, C. Barry, M. Dunn

Guests: E. VanGelder, A. Marshall, K. Conway, A. Weiland, H. Brosnan, G. Swanger, A. Rogers, T. Lamont, L. Atkinson, M. Lamont, S. Wilkinson, V. Mara, M. Guyton

1. AHDC Meeting Opens 8:00pm

Approval of draft minutes from May 13, 2021. J. Worden moved to table minutes until next meeting. Seconded by M. Audin. M. Audin – y, M. Bush – y, B. Cohen – y, A. Johnson – y, S. Makowka – y, B. Melofchik – y, C. Tee – y, J. Worden – y. Unanimous approval.

2. Appointment of Alternate Commissioners – Pleasant Street - M. Bush, A. Johnson, B. Melofchik (Plus Cohen, Audin, Tee, Worden) ; Mt Gilboa/Crescent Hill – B. Cohen, B. Melofchik, A. Johnson, S. Makowka (plus Audin, Tee, Worden)

3. Communications

- a. **Application for small shed at 100 Pleasant Street** – S. Makowka described application for small lean-to shed behind 100 Pleasant Street (corner lot). 3 feet deep x 6 feet wide x 6 feet tall, to be placed against garage at back rear corner of lot and only visible from Addison not from Pleasant Street. Asking whether this is a temporary structure or could we do a 10 day? B. Cohen moved that this is appropriate to 10 day since the proposed change will be so insubstantial to the building and the District that the hearing can be waived subject to notification of abutters. Seconded by A. Johnson. Roll Call for appropriateness for 10 day. Audin – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Bush – y, Cohen – y, Johnson – y, Melofchik – y (Motion Passed). B. Cohen moved to approve the application as submitted, seconded by M. Audin. Roll call for approval – Audin – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Bush – y, Cohen – y, Johnson – y, Melofchik – y (Motion Passed)
- b. **S. Makowka put monitor M. Bush in touch with homeowner of 46 Jason Street (raised bed) to discuss certificate issued and associated regulations.**

4. New Business

- a. **Formal Hearing for 137-139 Pleasant St. (Weiland/Brosnan) for dormer addition, window change, deck expansion, garage roof changes.** M. Bush brought up that procedural issue that a number of abutters did not physically receive timely notification due to errors in the zip codes listed on Town databases and have only had past 48 hrs to speak with neighbors and they will be within 10 feet of the proposed deck. 9 Irving Street neighbors spoke and asked for continuation to next meeting. S. Makowka said the application asks for window replacements, a new dormer, and replacing a garage roof with a deck. He also noted that the legal notices were technically done correctly but was sympathetic to the interest in providing informed feedback. He proposed splitting consideration of the addition/window changes for the 3rd floor and dormer from the proposed deck if there were no objections. Hearing no specific concerns he suggested we move forward with discussion of first two elements.

Applicant described that they are interested in replacing windows in the existing dormers to meet code requirements for access. They will be keeping the look of the double hung while meeting fire code. The three existing bedroom windows were shown. A 4th one facing toward 141 Pleasant St is the bathroom and will not be replaced. Custom cross bar can be inserted to emulate a double hung window. Looking towards replicating existing style while meeting modern fire codes. Stairwell from 2nd floor to 3rd floor has current height at lowest point of stairwell 5'2". Want to raise the ceiling here and need to build a new dormer. Plan to build a hip dormer similar in style to the existing dormers and are adding a window for appearance and consistency. Will also light the stairwell. Consistent with style of existing roof lines and existing dormer. Want master bedroom on top floor and need the stairway height. The sheathing of existing dormers is thought to be shingle but painted different color from the rest of the house. The Applicant confirmed that all materials will match existing conditions. Roof is 20+ years old and roof needs to be redone just from a functional standpoint (CONA Application will be submitted). No picture of windows with crossbar – existing windows are vinyl clad. They've already been replaced on house and are not original. No opposition from applicant to replace vinyl windows with wood windows consistent with Commission guidelines. They will do two casement windows instead of the sliders as shown on the original drawings which have not been updated. External views shown in photographs. It was noted that there is vinyl siding on the dormers, not wood shingle. It was suggested that the Applicant should put shingles on the dormer. They agreed and said that if possible they will remove vinyl siding from the front dormer and paint the supposed wood shingles underneath along with the new wood shingled dormers. A. Johnson asked about what the HDC has jurisdiction over – do privacy concerns enter into our decisions. S. Makowka said we are tasked to be sure changes are not incongruous in a HD, issues of individual privacy or taste are not under our purview, and that zoning issues dealing with setbacks that are controlled by Zoning regulations and the Building Dept and ZBA. A. Johnson suggested that we approve the window and dormer elements of the Application. M. Bush asked for a brief discussion about the windows – we would not normally approve a window later. B. Cohen said she would be ok to leave with a monitor for approval prior to installation. M. Bush was ok with this suggestion. S. Makowka invited public comment. V. Mara lives to left on 1st floor and has no problem with the dormer or the windows – the deck is her concern and feels blindsided about the deck.

A. Johnson moved that we accept proposal to create a new dormer and the installation of new windows consistent with the tenor of the discussion. C. Tee seconded for discussion. A. Johnson added that windows to be approved by the monitor prior to installation. C. Tee seconded amended motion. Roll call – B. Melofchik – y, A. Johnson – y, B. Cohen – y, M. Bush – y, J. Worden – y, C. Tee – y, M. Audin – y.

S. Makowka proposed that the Applicant give their presentation concerning the deck but said the Commission will not take any vote tonight but continue to next meeting for discussion and any vote on the deck. Deck presentation given including examples of other decks over garages. It was noted that the decks shown predate the creation of the District. They want the deck to be able to host family and friends in a nice outdoor space. J. Worden asked if they ran the plan by inspectional services – they said yes and that’s how they found out they were in a historic district. The inspector has offered no constructive criticism of the deck and he has approved a variety of internal features of the plan. M. Bush said that the fundamental point of building code is that fireproof materials are required within 10 feet of the lot line and one issue is that he is not aware of fireplace decking material. S. Makowka proposed we continue the deck issue to our next meeting on 6/10. Applicant agreed to continue hearing.

- b. **Informal Hearing for 15 Wellington Street (Cohen) for garage door changes.** B. Cohen stepped down as a Commissioner and S. Makowka replaced her as an alternate commissioner for Pleasant Street for the purposes of this hearing. B. Cohen said this is a minor project for replacing a garage door from the 1970s which has failed. She wants to replace it with a wood carriage house style door. Located at the back of the property. Proposing Everrite Carriage House style wood garage door (Bradford). Similar one approved for 7 Maple Street. Actually has full divided lights, all wood and constructed to look like what they originally had on the garage. J. Worden asked if it has faux hinges – answer was yes but she’s not planning to put them on. J. Worden moved that the proposal will be so insubstantial to the building and the District that the hearing can be waived subject to notification of abutters. Seconded by C. Tee. Roll call: C. Tee – y, J. Worden – y, M. Bush – abstain, A. Johnson – y, B. Melofchik – y, S. Makowka – y. Motion passes. J. Worden moved to approve application as submitted – M. Bush -abstain, B. Melofchik – y, S. Makowka – y, Worden – y, Tee – y. Motion passes. Note: M. Audin had left the meeting prior to these votes.

- c. **Informal Hearing for 72 Crescent Hill Ave. (Lamont) for removal of chicken coop.** M. Bush said there are two applications – one for patios and walkways and a second for removal of chicken coop but that neither had yet been legally noticed. Applicant described patio – 2 concrete steps falling apart and want to replace with granite. Patio would be located behind their house. No retaining wall, going straight into bottom step of back door but may need to be small 3-4” non-visible retaining wall because it slopes away from the door a little bit. View from street, right side of house – patio would be behind house and not visible. From left side of house there will be a very minimal view of patio essentially at grade. There would be a small walkway going from patio to back stairway. Steps shown they want to replace to basement door and bottom of back stairway at rear of house. This would not be visible from any point of public view. Front walkway: they want to replace with pavers.

Makowka noted that with no change of grade, the front walk qualifies for a CONA. Concrete pad at bottom of stairs and back door would also be appropriate for a CONA. The back patio which is very minimally visible and mostly at grade – S. Makowka

wants to know if it should all go under a CONA or whether a 10 day is necessary. No one had an objection so he will issue a CONA.

The chicken coop removal plan was presented. Back left corner is location. Bug infested, left side has already collapsed and part of roof is caved in dangerously. No wall on the backside. Concerned for safety of children and there is a ton of metal and glass inside. Worried about carpenter ants spreading to their house so want to demolish it and get rid of it entirely. Not ready to propose anything to replace it and only want to get permission to demolish. M. Bush abstained as a neighbor. B. Cohen moved that the removal of the chicken coop will be so insubstantial to the building and the District that the hearing can be waived subject to notification of abutters. qualifies for a 10-day Certificate. Seconded by S. Makowka for discussion. He is concerned that it is a structure that's been there for 60 years and he would prefer a formal hearing. Is it really so insubstantial to the purposes of the district that there's no need to hold a formal hearing? J. Worden agreed with S. Makowka and feels it doesn't meet the criteria. B. Cohen withdrew her motion and suggested a formal hearing would be appropriate. So they will come in on 6/24 for a formal hearing.

- d. **Discussion on "Little Libraries" in local HD.** S. Makowka noted application received for "little library" at 87 Pleasant Street and invited discussion about whether this is maybe "temporary" and we can address with a CONA instead of a COA but wants direction. It was decided that this one does need a hearing and we can use discussion to establish guidelines on size, shape, etc. on treatment of future instances. Need to have an informed discussion.
- e. **Discussion on future AHDC meetings** – Technically 6/15 is end of State of Emergency but S. Makowka's understanding is that Gov. Baker has filed legislation to extend meetings until the end of calendar year.

5. Old Business

- a. **Avon Place Historic District and Realtor Designee vacant commissioner seats** – No discussion
- b. **Report from Streetscape sub-committee** – No discussion
- c. **Modification of Design Guidelines (Fiberglass Gutters and Raised Beds/Planters) and Warrant Article Submission** – No discussion

6. Review of projects

- 7. **Meeting Adjourns** – J. Worden moved to adjourn, seconded by M. Bush. M. Audin – y, M. Bush – y, B. Cohen – y, A. Johnson – y, S. Makowka – y, B. Melofchik – y, C. Tee – y, J. Worden – y. Unanimous approval. 9:55pm